



New and Improved CRBA Process Adds Security

The Department of State is pleased to announce the introduction of a redesigned Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA). The CRBA is an official record confirming that a child born overseas to a U.S. citizen parent acquired U.S. citizenship at birth. The redesigned document has state-of-the-art security features that make it extremely resistant to alterations or forgery.

CRBAs have been printed at U.S. Embassies and Consulates around the world since their introduction in 1919. Effective January 3, 2011,



CRBAs will be printed at our passport facilities in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and New Orleans, Louisiana. Centralizing production and elimi-

nating the distribution of controlled blank form stock throughout the world ensures

(Continued on page 2)

Travel Tip

Spring Break In Mexico: "Know Before You Go!"

Over 100,000 American teenagers and young adults travel to resort areas throughout Mexico over spring break each year. We encourage all U.S. citizens to phone home periodically to assure family members of your safety and inform them of your whereabouts. Remember, whether you travel to Mexico by land, air, or sea, you are entering a foreign country and are subject to the laws and customs regulations of Mexico.

For more information about spring break in Mexico and other travel tips go to:

Travel.state.gov



New Visa Process Beginning in January

Under new visa application procedures implemented in January, most applicants will go to Applicant Service Centers (ASCs) prior to their consular section interview. The ASC staff will collect the applicant's biometric information that will be reviewed by the

consular section prior to the applicant's interview. ASCs will be located in buildings separate from the U.S. Embassy and Consulates. The new process will provide several advantages to applicants:

- Total visa application

costs will go down. Applicants will pay only one application fee that will cover the appointment, application, and courier fees.

- Many applicants who are renewing their visas will

(Continued on page 4)



America in Mexico: History through Art

America and Mexico have a long and involved history which is often evidenced by public art. This statue of Martin Luther King Jr. sits in Lincoln Park in Mexico City and was a gift from the U.S. Government. The park is in the Polanco neighborhood and is dedicated to Abraham Lincoln. Readers with interesting examples of Americana in Mexico that they want to share, can send a photo and brief description for publication in the newsletter.

The Taxman Cometh as April 15 Nears

Tax time is here again and tax forms are due to the Internal Revenue Service by April 15. U.S. citizens and resident aliens abroad may be allowed an automatic 2-month extension of time to file your return and pay any federal income tax that is due. You will be allowed the extension if you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien and on the regular due date of your return:

- You are living outside of the United States and Puerto Rico and your main

place of business or post of duty is outside the United States and Puerto Rico, or

- You are in military or naval service on duty outside the United States and Puerto Rico.

For more information contact: www.irs.gov, or call the International Taxpayer Assistance Center in Philadelphia at (215) 516-2000.

List of American Organizations

Below is a listing of clubs and associations with an international membership, along with their websites:

American Benevolent Society

www.abs.org.mx

American Chamber of Commerce

www.amcham.com.mx

American Legion

www.amlegion-mexico.org

American Society of Mexico, A.C.

www.americansocietyofmexico.com

Benjamin Franklin Library

<http://www.mexico.usembassy.gov/eng/library.html/>

Hash House Harriers

www.mchhh.com

Newcomers Club

www.newcomers.org.mx

Rotary International

www.rotarymexico.com

Salvation Army

www.salvationarmy.org

YMCA

www.ymca.org.mx

CRBAs: continued from page 1

improved uniform quality and lessens the threat of fraud.

CRBA applicants with urgent travel needs do not need to wait to receive their CRBA to apply for a passport. Applicants with urgent travel needs will be issued emergency passports at our Embassies and Consulates.

The U.S. Embassy in Mexico City strongly encourages all U.S. citizens who have children born in the Mexico City consular district to register them as U.S. citizens as soon as possible after the child is born. Upon registration, the child will be issued a Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States

of America (CRBA), which is an official record confirming that the child acquired U.S. citizenship at birth. A CRBA can be issued only at an American Consular Office overseas, and only before the child reaches 18 years of age.

More information is available at our website: <http://mexico.usembassy.gov>

Focus on San Miguel de Allende: by Consular Agent Ed Clancy

As I have met the other Consular Agents in Mexico, I have seen that for all of the similarities in agencies, there are still regional differences. In many ways, the type of town defines the type of visitor; San Miguel de Allende is a beautiful colonial town promising a restive, peaceful stay. Many people come looking for something, but the thing varies from person to person. And so residents tend to have something in common with other residents, something intangible. For my wife and I, that thing was a better life for our children. I have been a Consular Agent for 4 years, after having done many things -- I built a home, taught chess to 1st and 2nd graders, started a school for 7th graders, taught Math, Logic and World History, and acted as President of the San Miguel Chamber Music Festival.

Oh, I also taught a class in how to build a bridge using only popsicle sticks and glue. We build at bridge about 15" long, 4" high, and strong enough to support 56 volumes of the encyclopedia (we had to stop stacking the books for safety's sake). In San Miguel we have many constituencies -- vacationers, seasonal visitors, families here for 1-2 years for a bicultural experience and permanent residents. San Miguel has a permanent American citizen population of around 10,000. Each of these constituencies has different needs.

I love being a Consular Agent, partly because the daily work is so diverse. What I face daily is much different from what the Agents face in Cancun or Mazatlan. While the college age "spring break" crowd is not an issue here,



Consular Agent Ed Clancy and Consular Assistant Leticia Cerritos in front of the U.S. Consular Agency in San Miguel de Allende

we do have a large population of American citizens who speak little or no English. And they need passports, Counselor Reports of Birth Abroad (CRBAs,) and they have social security and tax questions. Each consular agency has its own features. One post may assist dozens of arrested Americans but only process dozens of passports. We only had a handful of U.S. citizen arrests last year, but processed almost 1,400 passports and CRBAs. For those of you who have not visited, you should consider a trip to San Miguel de Allende. But, you should be forewarned: I have met many visitors who have bought a home on their first visit.

Consular Agencies

There are 13 Consular Agencies in Mexico. The following four are in the Mexico City Consular District

Acapulco , Guerrero

Tel: 01-744) 465-0556

E-mail: consular@prodigy.net.mx

Ixtapa, Zihuatanejo:

Tel: (01-755) 553-2100

E-mail: consularixtapa@prodigy.net.mx

Oaxaca, Oaxaca

Tel: (01-951) 514-3054

E-mail: conagent@prodigy.net.mx

San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato

Tel (01-415) 152-2357

E-mail: consuladosma@gmail.com

U.S. Embassy Mexico City

Paseo de la Reforma #305
Col. Cuahatemoc
Mexico, D.F. 06500
Phone: 55-5080-2000 ext. 4938
Fax: 55-5080-2785
E-mail: acsmexicocity@state.gov

Scheduled Outreach Events



March 28: Warden Meeting —

U.S.Embassy, Mexico City

April 14: Town Hall for American Citizens

Casa de la Ciencia de la UAEM
Av. Morelos # 275 Col. Centro
C. P. 62000 Cuernavaca, Morelos
Teléfono: 01 (777) 318-36-07

ABS Hosts Annual Cherry Pie Event and Meeting



ABS Executive Director Barbara Franco and ABS President William Biese

The American Benevolent Society held its Annual Meeting and Cherry Pie Celebration on February 22, 2011 at the residence of the U.S. Ambassador. A highlight of the event was the presentation of a new award, the Herbert E. Wallace Lifetime Achievement Award for Service to the Community. The proud recipient of the first award was Executive Director of the Society Barbara J. Franco. ABS was founded in 1868 to provide medical, psychological and financial assistance to Americans in Mexico City. For more information about the society, contact them by phone at: (011 5255) 5540-5123, 5520 -3008; or by e-mail: absmex@gmail.com

New Visa Process continued from page 1

no longer require an interview with a consular officer. These applicants can simply visit the nearest ASC in order to submit application documents and provide fingerprints.

- Because the collection of some biometric information will take place at the ASC, applicants who are required to visit both the ASC and the consular section should spend less time at the consular section than they have had to in the past.

There are two methods to schedule your appointment;. You can use the internet appointment system or call to speak to an operator. For detailed information go to our website at: <http://visas.mexico.usembassy.gov>.

Applicants who have been unable to contact the Visa Call Center are advised to continue trying as the Center has recently expanded its ability to handle these calls. Alternatively, applicants may wish to access the Visa Information Service at <http://mexico.usvisa-info.com>

Visa Application Fees

- * \$140 USD for a tourist application
- * \$150 USD for petition-based cases (including temporary worker visas)
- * \$390 USD for treaty-trader and investor visas